

Grace Devotion

Week of September 13, 2026

⁸ *Owe no one anything, except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.* ⁹ *The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; you shall not murder; you shall not steal; you shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."* ¹⁰ *Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.*
(Romans 13:8 NRSVUE)



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Dear friends,

This Sunday, we continue our *Come to the Table* worship series with The Table of Love. Love is one of those words we use so often that it can sometimes lose its meaning. We say we love our family, our friends, our church, our favorite foods, and even our favorite television shows. But the love Jesus calls us to is something deeper. It is not simply about how we feel about one another. It is about how we choose to treat one another. Paul reminds us that the greatest thing we owe one another is love. Jesus showed us what that kind of love looks like. Jesus did not make acceptance dependent on having all the right answers or following every rule perfectly. Instead, Jesus looked at people's hearts. He listened. He talked with people. He sought to understand them. Again and again, Jesus called people back into relationship.

That can be difficult. It is much easier to love people when we agree with them. It is harder when someone disappoints us, misunderstands us, or sees the world differently than we do. Yet Jesus reminds us that love does not mean avoiding difficult conversations. Sometimes love means having the conversation because the relationship matters. Jesus tells his disciples, "where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." I love the image of that promise. Jesus is present when we gather—not because we always agree, but because we belong to one another. Around God's table, there is room for different opinions, different experiences, different personalities, and different ways of seeing the world. What holds us together is not that we are all alike. What holds us together is love.

This week, I invite you to think about the people around your own table. Is there someone who needs a little more patience? Someone you need to listen to more carefully? Someone with whom you have a disagreement? Perhaps love is inviting you to take one small step toward greater understanding. We may not always agree, and we may not always get it right. But we can choose love. We can choose kindness. We can choose to listen. We can choose to remember that every person who sits at God's table is someone God loves. When we gather in love, even when we are not all of one mind, Christ is there among us.

Prayer:

Loving God, Thank You for the gift of love that brings us together. Help us to love not only those who are easy to love, but also those who challenge us. Give us patience when we disagree, humility when we are wrong, and courage to listen when we would rather walk away. Help us seek understanding instead of judgment and relationship instead of division. May our words and actions reflect the love You have shown us. When we gather together, remind us that Christ is present among us. Amen.

With Grace and Love,

Pastor Amy

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pastor Amy".

September 13, 2026
Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Westminster Chimes and Prelude
Welcome/Announcements

**+“One Thing Remains” #1

** Call to Worship **Taking Our Place, Opening to Others**
Lector: We come to this table not only for food, but for
friendship and family.

**Congregation: We are here not only to eat, but to
serve.**

Lector: We prepare our meal of bread and fruit of the vine
with compassion.

**Congregation: We invite everyone to join in the
feast.**

Lector: We are all part of one human family.

Congregation: We are united in love.

** Opening Prayer: (pray silently or aloud)
**Welcoming God, You invite us to Your table just as we
are. Open our hearts to receive Your grace and make
room for those who may feel left out or forgotten. Teach
us to see one another as you see us—as beloved children,
welcomed and loved. May we carry Your welcome with
us as we leave this place. Amen.**

**° Hymn: “Come to the Table”

see insert

** Sharing the Peace of Christ

Celebration of Our Gifts

** Offertory Response: “Doxology”

#625

** Prayer of Dedication

Prayer of Confession/Silent Reflection/Assurance of Grace

Joys and Concerns
Praying for Others
Lord’s Prayer

**° Hymn: “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling” #92

Scripture Reading:

Romans 13:8-14

Matthew 18:15-20

Time for the Young at Heart

Message: “The Table of Love”

“At This Table”

see insert

Holy Communion

**Prayer of Thanksgiving

**As we have been shown the love of Jesus, may we take
on the mantle of love in our own lives, patterning
ourselves for ever-growing hearts of compassion. We
have been fed. We have been nourished. We have been
transformed. It is with Great Thanks that we have
come to this table. Amen!**

**+“ Holy Forever”

#75

** Final Blessing

** “A Choral Benediction”

Postlude

** Please stand, if you are able.

+ Black contemporary folder

° Blue hymnal

Come to the Table is a five-week worship series based on resources by Marcia McFee, Worship Design Studio. Used with permission.

Announcements

- Please consider sharing your talents by hosting snacks in the Gathering Place on Sunday mornings or acting as Lector. Both sign-up sheets can be found in the Gathering Place on the bulletin board.
- Join us for Blessing of the Pets September 12th @ 1:00 PM
- Tell your friends: September 13th-- Sunday School fall kickoff for grades K-5 and Confirmation Sunday kickoff for grades 6-12
- Deacons Fund Offering will be collected on September 13th

Upcoming Events

Bible Study Group – September 9th @ 12:30 PM – Movie to follow
Monthly Movie – September 11th @ 3:00 PM
Blessing of the Pets – September 12th @ 1:00 PM
Women's Ministry – IN PERSON @ 7:30 PM

Upcoming Meetings

- Outreach Committee Meeting – September 14th @ 4:15 PM
- Pastoral Relations Committee Meeting – September 14th @ 5:30 PM
- Consistory Meeting – September 14th @ 6:00 PM
- Worship & Music Committee Meeting – September 21st @ 3:30 PM
- Faith Formation Committee Meeting – September 21st @ 5:00 PM



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Grace United Church of Christ

100 Fourth Street

Hanover, Pennsylvania 17331

717-632-1146

Prayer Line: 717-632-1146 LINE 3

Thank you for today's Worship Leaders:

Pastor - Amy Fawks

Lector – Craig Bixler

Guest Pianist – Grace Neilson

Head Usher – Jenn Weaver & Joleen Fennell

At Christ's table, all are welcome. Our bread and juice are always gluten-free so everyone may share in this meal.

LOVE DOESN'T
HARM A
NEIGHBOUR
LOVE
THEREFORE
IS THE
FULFILMENT
OF THE
LAW ROM. 13:10

- SOUL
- THEY
- SAME
- WHICH
- CONSCIENCE
- VERY
- WHOM
- THAT
- ADULTERY
- NEIGHBOUR
- TIME
- WORKS
- WALK
- JESUS

Romans 13

J M K T B O Z T G R W A C W P Q
O H K B O M V W D J H M R V H G
B F Y U J W S Z H S O P U C B A
V I Z Z O A A H U I M H G L M D
U E F S P L M S R D C M X Q P A
C T R C V K E W J N T H J U T D
X H Z Y O J Q H Y E X H P U A U
T A Z V P N U O M I D H E Z E L
H T H P G S S I M J V R H Y P T
N O I Z K G T C T V E S D V N E
K L X R C B N E I G H B O U R R
T G O S X B M W G E H G G U E Y
W W W T H C Q A C Y N L G Z L N
G M U A J H V U Y R B C J Q W H
H W Z P R Q D A E W K Q E Z L T
B K J R G S Z H J N B S G G P R

Gathered In His Name

For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them." Matthew 18:20 [NIV]

The puzzle is based on Matthew 18:15-20



Come Together

K U H E A V E N K L H R M I K
C N E X G L I S T E N E R I L
T U A S Y L O O S E Q E A J E
O V S M Z R A Q X G T N T Z Z
R G U X E C Q W G S O Y E W F
B C O Y L H C H I Z F Y E D O
U G H E X H L S D X W D A T W
L B R O T H E R K N M I M W H
S G L C Y E K F A T H E R O S
Q M A J R H A F E W Q K U S B
F K J T C E P R X U K B B R B
P A E R H P F T T C D K P F D
A M U M M E X U C H A Z H N K
B H G L M X R I S G N H I G Q
C Y D E T O A G R E E B K K R

REFUSE
NAME
BROTHER

FATHER
BIND
LOOSE

HEAVEN
TWO
SISTER

FAULT
GATHER
AGREE

CHURCH
EARTH
LISTEN